# A LETTER OUT OF SUFFOLK TO A FRIEND in *LONDON*.

GIVING

Some *Account* of the laſt *Sickneſs* and *Death* of Dr. *WILLIAM SANCROFT*, late *Lord Archbiſhop* of *CANTERBURY*.

*LONDON*;

Printed in the Year, MDCXCIV.

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# A Letter out of *SUFFOLK* to a Friend in *LONDON*, &c.

*SIR*,

WHen you was pleaſed to deſire of me a particular Account of the laſt and fatal Sickneſs of our late *Metropolitan*, and of his *Grace*'s pious Behaviour under it, I could not but Congratulate with my Self the happy Imployment you had put me to; and do hereby return you my moſt hearty Thanks for the freſh Opportunity you have been inſtrumental in giving me, of revolving in my Thoughts thoſe admirable and Chriſtian Vertues, ſo eminent and conſpicuous in the whole Courſe and Tenor of his Life, and yet more illuſtrious at the Time of his Death: The Memory of him indeed will be always precious in the Eyes of good Men; and I am perſwaded his Name will never be forgotten in theſe and the Neighbouring Kingdoms, nor ever remembred, or mentioned, but with Marks of Honour, Eſteem and Veneration. But ſuch Memorials are *general* and

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languid, and will but coldly affect our Hearts, or diſpoſe us to Imitation, except his particular Graces be ruminated on, and riveted within us by devout and ſerious Meditation. This will raiſe in us (as was in him) a Spirit of Meekneſs, Mortification, Fortitude and Conſtancy: And his Death will improve the World (as his Life always did) by recommending a moſt generous and ſincere Piety, and encouraging us in the moſt difficult Duties of Religion. And I muſt confeſs to you, that it is owing to your Commands that I have had a greater occaſion, on this great Subject, of glorifying God, (who hath given ſuch Graces to Men) of ſupporting my ſelf, and encouraging my Brethren in a State of Affliction and Trouble, by the power and prevalency of ſo renowned an Example. I conceive therefore, your Requeſt to me in this particular, was not ſo much to ſatisfy your Curioſity as to affect your Conſcience, to provoke you to and preſerve in you ſuch a ſteady and unſhaken Fidelity to Truth, as is not to be undermined, or wrought upon, by any ſpecious Temptations from the World. Our Holy Faith is not founded on the Examples of Men, but the Practice of it is mightily encouraged and aſſiſted by them. And here you have before you a Glorious *Confeſſor*; here you have your Holy Arch-Biſhop making a ſafe Paſſage through Storms and Tempeſts, and carrying his Integrity and Conſcience undefiled to the Grave. And doth not this bright Example mightily enſpirit and inflame your Zeal? Doth it not make your Afflictions eaſy, and

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your Vertue ſtrong? Would you now receive the *Wages of Unrighteouſneſs* how much ſoever you may want them? Or would you change your deſolate and narrow Circumſtances, for thoſe more plentiful at the Expence of your Conſcience, for all the World? Theſe are the Fruits of this great Prelates Vertues, and this is the uſe we are to make of them; to animate us in the ſame Courſe, to aſpire to the ſame degrees of Uprightneſs, to deſpiſe the World and to take up the Croſs, not as a Blemiſh, but an Honour to us: Otherwiſe, however we may praiſe and admire him, 'tis but Flattery and Hypocriſy; we celebrate his Memory deceitfully, both to his Injury and our own. For if his great Vertues deſerve to be commended, they deſerve to be imitated too: The Praiſe of the Tongue is but Breath and Air, and the Character goes no deeper than our Lips: But if we live like him, and purſue the ſame Vertues, with the ſame Faithfulneſs and Conſtancy, our Love and Admiration is ſeated in our Hearts and Conſciences, and we evidence the Honour we had for him, by the nobleſt Principles of Humane Nature. If therefore we ſhall make him our Pattern, and follow his Example, we ſhall do more right to his Memory, than by all the Panegyricks in the World.

I could heartily wiſh that I were able to ſet this great Example in a true Light, that I could draw his *Grace*'s Picture at full length, and give you a compleat Account of the whole Series of his Life from the begin-

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ning to the end; and this (if it was faithfully done) perhaps would be as bright a Pattern of Vertue as has for many Ages been communicated to the World, and would emulate the Piety of the first and purest Times, and the Faithfulness of the Primitive Christian Bishops: But this is a Task too difficult for me upon many Accounts, and I hope will be undertaken by some abler Hand, and indeed is more than you require of me: However, as Introductory to what follows, I shall lay before you these two General Observations.

I. That that high and important Station which he held in the Church of *England*, was never better filled nor manag'd with better Conduct: His great Abilities of Learning, Wisdom, Courage and Sincerity, abundantly qualified him to guide the Church, and steer the Helm of it, in the most dangerous and surprising Junctures. There never was a Time since the beginning of Christianity, when all these Qualifications were not necessary in a Christian Bishop, and which he had not always more or less occasion to exercise: But it must be confessed that in his Days, the Church was beset with extraordinary Difficulties, and required an extraordinary measure of Prudence and Resolution, of Faithfulness and Zeal, to manage that great Trust committed to his Charge, to the Honour of God, the Interest of Religion, and the good and benefit of the Church.

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There are two famous Inſtances which give teſtimony to this, and abundantly evidence the greatneſs of his Mind, the wiſdom of his Conduct, and the zeal and care he had for the preſervation of Religion, and the ſafety of the Church. The Firſt was when he was to ſtruggle with the Commands of a *Lawful* Soveraign, which ſeem'd to interfere with the Intereſt of the eſtabliſhed Religion, and the known Laws of the Land, but of this he made no difficulty, and ſoon reſolved rather humbly to decline the Commands of his Rightful Prince, than to obey him to the prejudice of the true Religion, and the Eſtabliſhed Laws. But the manner of doing this was as exemplary as his Courage, when his King laid uneaſy Commands, and which he could not comply with, he did not preſently fly in his Face, and load Him with Invectives and Aſperſions much leſs did he undermine his Throne, invite the Invader of it, or by ungodly or reveng'ful Arts endeavour to defeat him of his Juſt and Hereditary Rights: But, like a true Chriſtian Biſhop, he committed his Cauſe to God, and poſſeſſed his Soul in Patience. He could not do an unlawful thing, but he knew well that that Reaſon extended to all *unlawful Things*; and that he could no more violate the Rules of Religion, and the Laws of the Land, in reſiſting his Lawful Prince, or injuring him in his undoubted Rights, than he could violate them in Obedience to him. Sincere Vertue is always uniform, and all of a piece; and he knew that the ſame Religion and

Laws which enjoyn'd him not to obey, oblig'd him likewise not to *resist*, and *rebel*; they were of equal Obligation in both Cases, and their Authority as Sacred, and could not be broken with a safe Conscience in one Instance no more than in the other. He stood indeed in the Gap, with all the degrees of Fortitude and Resolution that the greatness of the Occasion required, but these were Christian and Episcopal Vertues, and joyn'd with the same degrees of Meekness and Humility, by humble Petition, by all modest and just ways he declined Compliance, but without the least insolence of Behaviour or disrespect to the Person of his Prince, much less to shake off his Authority and Government, whom he knew to be the Rightful King of these Kingdoms, and established in the Throne by the Laws of God and the Land.

It is true in this Action (though it is to be fear'd of *some*, not with the same Intention) he did not stand alone; but several of his Brethren, my Lords the Bishops, and most of the inferiour Clergy bore their parts and join'd with their *Metropolitan*: But as his Post and Station, his Wisdom and Conduct, his great part in that whole Affair deservedly challenges the first place, so the ascribing to him what is really his due, does by no means detract from the merits of the rest: All those who acted in Conjunction with him, and upon the same Foundation and Principles, their Credit and Vertue remain intire to them, and they will never lose the Reputation of their Constancy and Faithfulness; but those who acted out of sinister and corrupt Ends, and have

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ſince forſaken their Principles, and wofully prevaricated, they have blaſted their own Reputation, and have little conſulted the Honour of that excellent Church of which they were Members. However I muſt tell you a plain Truth that ſome of them who then thought themſelves, and ſtill would fain be accounted main Pillars of the Proteſtant Cauſe, were, in this Affair, very fleeting and unſetled, and for finding out *Salvo*'s and Diſtinctions; and their ſubſequent Practice was in a great meaſure deriv'd from his Wiſdom, Authority and Influence.

I ſhall not need to mention to you his Conduct in the ordinary Branches of his Metropolitical and Epiſcopal Office: how he took care to diſcharge thoſe with great Faithfulneſs, to preſerve the Church of *England* in its Rights and Eſtabliſhments, and to ſecure the Purity of her Doctrine, Worſhip and Diſcipline, ſo far as his Power and Authority extended. Theſe are notorious to all the Kingdom. And it will be ſufficient here to obſerve, that while he ſate in the Chair, there was no under-hand trucking with the *Socinians*, or others, out of her Communion; He was a very wiſe, but withal a very plain and ſincere Biſhop; He was above little Tricks and Politick Arts, and knew not how to preach againſt People, and then to ſtroak and fawn, and curry favour with them when he had done: He was never at the bottom of any Project to give up the *Liturgy, the Rights and Ceremonies of the Church:* For alas! (quite contrary to modern Policy) He thought that the beſt way to preſerve a Society had been in keeping ſteadfaſtly

to the terms of it; he had as great a tenderneſs and compaſſion, for the ſeduced and miſled as any Man, and uſed all juſt and moderate ways, for their Reduction and Information, but in good truth, he had not that *Latitude* of Principle to ſacrifice the Church out of ſecular Intrigues and Politicks, and to deliver up the Mounds and Fences of it to a Party which had been endeavouring the Deſtruction of it for a hundred Years and more, and who once had effectually ruined her. When he had favour at Court, and was able to recommend a Perſon to the higheſt Offices in the Church, it was never his Cuſtom to lay aſide, or poſt-pone, the moſt worthy and able Men, and firm to the Conſtitution of the Church, and to make uſe of his Intereſt to advance a ſort of Men who are equally principled for *Geneva* as for *England*, or for any Conſtitution beſides; who were never true nor honeſt to the Church in their Inferiour Charges, and who are far better qualified to betray than to ſupport her. In fine, when he was poſſeſſed of the Revenues belonging to his Church, he never made it his buſineſs to deſtroy and plunder it, by cutting down the Timber upon little Pretences, and then putting the Money into his own Pocket. Upon the whole, he was a *true Father*; the Intereſts of the Church were his own; and he ſpent himſelf in preſerving her Honour, Rites and Revenues: Whereas it hath been long ago obſerved, that an *Intruder* is always a *Step-Father*, who ſpins out the Bowels of the Church, and fattens himſelf with her Blood; who having no legal Right, and Foundation, is for compounding

pounding with Religion, and bartering the Securities of the Church to ſupport himſelf and uphold the Injuſtice of his own Tenure. And this Obſervation is ſo true that it hath never yet failed in any one Inſtance. He that came into the Church *a Thief and a Robber* hath always continued ſo; and from the beginning of the Church to this very Day there hath not been one *Eccleſiaſtical Uſurper*, but, who in one or more Inſtances, hath pawn'd ſomething of Religion to gain an Acceſſion to his Party, and to ſecure and ſtrengthen his unrighteous Poſſeſſion.

Another famous Inſtance demonſtrating this great Prelat's Vertue and Piety, and his admirable fitneſs for that High Office he ſuſtained in the Church was this, that he choſe rather actually to ſuffer an expulſion from all his Honours and Eccleſiaſtical Revenues, than to violate his Conſcience, or ſtain the purity of thoſe Principles, he had always maintained and adher'd to: This is a Proof next to Martyrdom, and there cannot be given a greater teſtimony to a Man's Sincerity, except it had been the laying down his Life; and no doubt, that he would alſo have as chearfully done, had the Divine Providence thought fit to have call'd him to that Tryal. God knows the Heart, but Men cannot know one another, nor yet themſelves, but by Tryals and Temptations: Diſguiſed Vertue will deceive the World, and perhaps our ſelves too, and when we meet with no interuption in our Affairs, a general care of inoffenſiveneſs may paſs for great Uprightneſs, both in the Eyes of

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Men and in our own: But when the Buſineſs comes to Experiment, when we muſt either part with the World or with our Conſciences and Principles; this is a Touch-ſtone of our Sincerity, and the diſtinction is ſoon made. And here we have a moſt Reverend *Arch-Biſhop* thruſt from his high Station, and diveſted of all his Spiritual Promotions and Preferments, meerly upon the account of his Conſcience, and which he might eaſily have kept, if he could have but tamper'd with his Principles, and brib'd his Judgment to ſubmiſſion, by carnal Inducements and fallacious Arguments. But as he was too wiſe and judicious to be impos'd upon, ſo he was too honeſt to act upon hypocritical Pretenſions and ſophiſtical Evaſions; for (as he often ſaid) *he had rather ſuffer under his Lawful Prince than flouriſh under an Uſurper.* Alas! Sir, he never was able to know, which way the People (collectively, or repreſentatively) became *Sovereign* of this Kingdom, and could give away the Government to whom they pleaſed; he never had Philoſophy enough to know that the Streams roſe higher than the Fountain, that the Receiver of a Gift for that very Reaſon had a better Title to it than thoſe that gave it, how thoſe which gave away that which was none of their own, could derive a better right to the Taker than they had themſelves. He had no skill to dive into the Myſtery of a People being *Conquered* by themſelves, and thereby deriving a *Title of Conqueſt* to a third Perſon; he could not expound the Riddle of *Conquering* by Vote, or that *giving* and *taking* were diſcriminating Marks of

a *Conqueſt*; nor could he ſubmit his Conſcience to the *maddeſt Hypotheſis* that ever was broach'd by Men. He had not the nice Subtilty to diſtinguiſh between *Allegiance de facto*, and *Allegiance de jure*. For as he knew that all Duties whatſoever, were founded in *Right* and flow'd from it, and there is no ſuch thing in the World as a Duty to *Wrong*, ſo he knew likewiſe that neither our own Laws, nor any in the whole World, had been ſo contradictious and inconſiſtent, as to provide for a *double Allegiance* in oppoſition to one another. Theſe were *Fig-leaves*, which ſome had ſewed together to cover their Nakedneſs, but the covering was ſo very thin and ſlight, that a far leſs diſcerning Judgment than his, would eaſily look through them, it needed no Skill nor Art, but *plain Honeſty* was ſufficient to uncloath them, and to perceive that they ſerv'd only to blind or ſhuffle with the Conſcience, by no means to direct or ſatisfy it. He knew an *Oath* was too ſacred and ſerious, to be taken upon phantoms and ſhadows; upon ſuch wild and ridiculous ſuggeſtions, as have not the leaſt being in Nature, Reaſon, Religion, or the Law. And he knew withal, that to take two contradictory *Oaths*, muſt neceſſarily involve a Man in the guilt of *Perjury*. In ſuch a caſe, there is no medium betwixt *ſwearing* and *forſwearing*. Upon this Baſis he ſtood, and he ſtood like a Rock, firm and unſhaken, and all the Billows that beat upon him, could not make the leaſt Impreſſion. His high Poſt and great Revenues, were mighty Temptations, but when they came to be put into the Ballance with his Conſcience, he ſoon determined

mined his Choice, and gave a convincing Demonſtration, that his Vertue was ſuperiour to the World, and independent of it; that *Truth* is better and far more elegible than Riches and Honour, when for the ſake of *one poor perſecuted Truth*, a Man can without the leaſt heſitancy, forſake all that is great and honourable in the World. It is true, on this great occaſion he had many Partners, *Seven of my Lords the Biſhops*, and a conſiderable number of the *Inferiour Clergy*, beſides many of the *Nobility*, *Gentry* and *Commonalty*, preſerved themſelves from Contagion, and gave the ſame great proof, of their invincible Fidelity and Conſtancy; whereby they have not only ſecured the uprightneſs of their own Conſciences, but have withal maintain'd and upheld, the Honour and Reputation of the *Church of England*, which hath ſo terribly been impaired, by the *Scandalous Apoſtacy* of ſo many others. And this is of ſuch mighty conſequence, that it muſt be confeſſed that Poſterity hath nothing left to vindicate the Church and her avow'd Principles, but their Heroic and memorable Examples; and when After-Ages, ſhall come to diſpute the Principles of our Church, they will have the Piety and Practices of theſe excellent Men, to counter-ballance the general defection, which hath overſpread this unhappy Nation.

II. Another General Obſervation which I have to remark to you, is, that theſe immortal Vertues, which have embalm'd his Name to all Poſterity, were not newly acquir'd, or ev'n exerciſed; but his younger

Year

Years gave an early Teſtimony of the Greatneſs of his Mind, and the ſteadineſs of his Principles. There was a Time when a wicked *Covenant* and *Engagement* were to be taken; the one *Oath* was deſign'd to propagate *Rebellion*, and to deſtroy the Church, and the other to ſupport a *Cruel Uſurpation:* And theſe (in their reſpective Seaſons) block'd up all Preferments, and a Man could neither keep what he had, nor be admitted to any other, but he muſt firſt make his way by ſwallowing the *Deadly and Accurſed Thing*. In thoſe Dayes, he was in the Prime and Flower of his Age, when gawdy Seducements are generally the moſt prevailing, when the Paſſions and Propenſities to the World are moſt ſtrong, and the Judgment leſs mature and ſolid to correct them; but ev'n in his greener Years his Vertue was ripe; he then became an actual Sufferer for the very ſame Principles, and choſe to relinquiſh his Intereſt in his Native Countrey, and to ſubmit to a voluntary Exile rather than advance himſelf by the Rewards of Ungodlineſs, and own the Authority of an *unjuſt, though prevailing, Uſurpation*. This therefore is not the firſt Time that he gave the World proof of his admirable Conſtancy; He was a *Confeſſor* near fifty Years before upon the very ſame Account; and the *very ſame Reaſons and Arguments*, (that in thoſe Days were urg'd for Rebellion and Uſurpation) which could not work upon him then, much leſs could they do it now, (though they had *New Names* put to them) when his Judgment and Vertue were improv'd; and the Truth of thoſe Principles con-

firm'd by his moſt mature Thoughts, and by long Experience. He had ſeen and ſifted all theſe matters long before, and it was not likely, that to a wiſe and good Man, the *Copy* and *Tranſcript* ſhould prevail more upon his Riper Years than the *Original* it ſelf did upon his Youth; *Doleman*'s Rebellious Arguments had no better Effect when tranſplanted into Dr. *St——t*'s *Unreaſonableneſs of a New Separation*, than they had in the Vile Book of *Parſons* the *Jeſuit* it ſelf; and the *very ſame Numerical Reaſons* could ſatisfy as little, when baited with modern Names, than they did heretofore, when they came immediately from the Pens and Perſons of the firſt Authors themſelves, from *Regicide Cook*, and *Milton*, from *John Goodwin*, and *Hugh Peters*. In ſhort, he was always juſt to his Conſcience, and true to his Principles, and the repeated Inſtances he hath given of an untainted Fidelity will exceedingly add to his great Character; That in all the various Concuſſions of State, the Turns and Changes of the World, he was always the ſame; and the laſt great Actions of his Life will ſuffer no Diminution or Reproach from any Temporizing Levity or Unworthineſs of his former Proceedings. I do not deny but a Man may once trip and miſcarry, and afterwards relent and recover himſelf, and become very Great and Uſeful; and there is no Repugnancy in the Reaſon and Nature of Things, for a Man erring through weakneſs of Judgment, inconſiderateneſs or violence of Temptations, to raiſe himſelf up again, and to ſtand firm ever after: But if we ſhall conſult Fact, we ſhall

find

find this Theory not always, perhaps not very often, confirmed by Experience. Those who have once play'd Fast and Loose with their Principles are generally prepared to travel the Compass; and we have in our own Memories some who pass'd from the *Covenant* to the *Engagement*, from thence to the *Cromwell*'s, thence to the *Restauration*, and from thence to the *Revolution*: And no doubt, if there was occasion, from the same unchangeableness of Principle could travel the same way back again. Now Sir, if this be no Blemish to a Man's Integrity; if when he can receive new Principles with every Tide, and turn himself and his Conscience to every Turn of Affairs; if he can dispute the same Things *Pro* and *Con*, and resolve a Case of Conscience backwards and forwards, and rise and fall his Doctrines in Proportion to his Interests; if notwithstanding he shall sustain the Character of Steadiness and Fidelity, then by my Consent *Ecebolius* and the *Vicar of Bray* shall henceforward be reckon'd among the Confessors, A versatile and winding Craft shall pass for the mark of a plain and fair-dealing man, and the *Wind* and the *Moon* be hereafter the fittest *Emblems* of Constancy. But if Mankind have always taken other Estimates of Things, if the Truth and Goodness of a man's Vertue hath been always measured by its Strength, that it is able to abide the Trial, to weather all Storms and mutable Accidents, and remain the same under all Difficulties and Discouragements; if the difference between counterfeit, and standart Vertue consists in Permanency and Perseve-

rance, not ſubject to the Changes and Chances of this Lower World, If finally theſe are in themſelves, and were always accounted great and glorious Things, then the ſeveral Stages of our *Venerable Father's Life* will afford us ſo many Eternal Monuments of his Piety. And he hath left behind him very few, who in this degenerate Age are likely to equal his Vertues, or to come near them by many degrees, and none leſs than *him who ſits in his Chair*, and ſome others who fill the Sees of our Depriv'd Biſhops.

But, Sir, Will you give me leave more fully to excite your Piety and Imitation, and to improve to your Uſe and my own this great Example to the beſt Advantage. It may be neceſſary to go a little deeper, and to uncover the Root from whence ſo many Excellent and Praiſe-worthy Actions did ſpring; for it will be impoſſible to copy out one of his great Vertues, without acquiring a juſt Proportion of all the reſt. To aim at his *Conſtancy* without his *Humility*, is to plant without a Soil, and to aſpire at his inflexible *Faithfulneſs* without an equal meaſure of his *Mortification*, is to make a Superſtucture without a Foundation. And therefore it may be fit to obſerve, That that wonderful Staidneſs and Evenneſs of his Conduct, thoſe high and eminent Vertues which render'd him ſo conſpicuous, were built on a Foundation abundantly ſufficient to ſupport the Weight of them: His *Humility* and *Denial of the World* were as bright as any of his Vertues, and bore up this mighty Fabrick: The World could lay no Byaſs on his Affections, to ſuborn his

his Judgment, and tamper with his Conſcience; but he could and did with equal Affection and Reſolution embrace Truth, when naked and deſpiſed, as well as when attended with Honours and Revenues: And you your ſelf know, and ſo does every Man elſe that had the Happineſs to converſe with him, That he ſuffered his Remove from his Poſſeſſions and Preferments, with greater Satisfaction and Chearfulneſs than any man could take them. It was a ſmart Anſwer that he gave to a Perſon, ſpeaking to him concerning the Revolution, and what were like to be the Effects of it; *Well!* (ſaith he, ſmiling) *I can live upon Fifty Pounds a Year*, meaning his Paternal Inheritance; and thereby intimating how little the loſs of all the reſt would affect him, and what an inconſiderable Inducement the higheſt Station of the Church was to miſlead him, and to pervert his Conſcience. He had no *Pride*, *Ambition*, *Covetouſneſs* or *Luxury* to maintain, and conſequently was ſecure againſt all Aſſaults, that could come from thoſe Quarters. When a man hath once brought himſelf to that paſs, that he cannot live under ſo much by the Year; whenever ſuch a Poſture of Affairs happens, that he cannot honeſtly keep his Integrity and his Incomes too, he is in great danger of turning to the left Hand, of diſtruſting Providence and ſtarving his Conſcience for to keep warm his Back and his Belly. When Ambition and Love of the World prevail upon the Affections, Religion will become Art and Managment, calculated for Deſigns and Intereſts, muſt vary and alter with Seaſons

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and Opportunities; and such a Man's Conscience will observe the Wind, and be sure to sit always in that Corner from whence Preferments come. In fine, whosoever hath not a competent degree of Self-Denial, Mortification and Contempt of the World, Religion can have no sure hold of him nor he of Religion, and he lies under an utter Incapacity of being true to himself and to his Conscience; his *Principles* will be Arbitrary and Precarious, and follow all the Revolutions and mutable Contingencies of this World: What therefore our Lord and Saviour said, *Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple*, St Luke 14.33. This was not so much a Command, as a plain Declaration of the State of the Case: There is an utter Impossibility in the Nature of Things, That a Man should be Christ's Disciple who is not prepared and disposed to forsake all the World for him, and to put these Dispositions into Act, upon all just Occasion; for otherwise, he can be a Christian no longer than his Religion and Interests agree; for when they differ one must be parted with, and the Predominate Principle will certainly carry him, and he will determine his Choice in behalf of his Affections. To be mortified to the World therfore, is not only to do our Duty in that one Instance; but to gain a General Preservative: The *Cross*, is the fundamental Principle of Christianity, and secures the honest Observance of all the rest.

By this Time, Sir, I presume that you perceive how necessary it was to enter upon this last Paragraph; it hath

hath an immediate tendency to lead us in the right way, and to direct us how we may follow his Steps; if we would imitate his Greatneſs of Mind, his Chriſtian Fortitude and admirable Conſtancy; why then we muſt lay as deep a Foundation as he did, we muſt mortify our Pride and Paſſions, and wean our Affections from the World; we muſt endeavour to attain the ſame meaſure of Patience, Humility, and Self-denial; and if this be effectually done, we may then hope to partake of his Spirit; but if our Appetites remain irregular, if our Thirſt of the World be yet immoderate and intemperate, we have a Plummet at our Heels, which will be ſure to weigh us down, let our Judgments and Underſtanding be what they will, and let the Occaſion of Perſeverance be never ſo Juſt and Honourable. The World is, and always will be changable, and if there be room left in our Hearts to plant that Engine, it will *turn us about* in ſpight of the cleareſt Apprehenſions, and the beſt Reſolutions we can make; when we dote too much upon the Fortune, we ſhall forſake our Miſtreſs on the Loſs of her Portion and court another. In Truth without ſuch a meaſure of indifferency to the World, it will be impoſſible we ſhould be true and faithful upon any Occaſion where Truth and Fidelity are required, we ſhall abandon our *Friend* or our *Father*, our *King* or our *Country*, as well as our *Vertue*, in a declining and unproſperous Condition: For 'tis an infallible Maxim in Morals, and which holds good in all Inſtances, that *Ambition* and *Levity* of *Principle*, that *Covetouſneſs* and

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*Unfaithfulneſs*, that *Love* of the *World* and *Inconſtancy* are convertible, there is never one, without ſome Proportion and Degrees of the other.

And thus Sir, I have laid before you theſe two General Obſervations; and I think I ſhall not need to remark, how fit and pertinent they are to lead us into the Conſideration of the laſt Scene of this Great Man's Life. Here we have the Picture of his great Vertues, of his Moral and Chriſtian Endowments; and when we ſhall find his *laſt Hand* to it, when we ſhall ſee it compleatly finiſhed by himſelf, it will give a mighty addition to its Grace and Beauty; the *laſt* and *finiſhing* Strokes are always the faireſt, and give Luſtre and Perfection to all the reſt. And this is what I have undertaken (according to my poor meaſure) to give you ſome Account of: And when you caſt your Eye lower, you will ſee that as he lived ſo he died. He reſign'd up his Soul in the Profeſſion and Practice of thoſe very Principles which he owned and maintained with ſo great Conſtancy and Vigour all the time of his Life, which is the moſt perfect and unſuſpected Evidence that a man can give of his entire Satisfaction in his Principles and of his great Sincerity in the owning them, and living up to them. The Hour of Death, is of all others, the moſt unfit Seaſon for Hypocriſy and Diſſimulation; and if there be any Serioufneſs and Sincerity in men they will ſhew themſelves on a Death-bed. But when a man hath liv'd unblamably all his Days, when the moſt malicious and critical Eye is never able to tax him with deceitful

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Daubing, in the whole courſe of a long Life; when ſuch a Man ſhall come to lie under an apparent ſence of his Diſſolution, if in the laſt Article of his Life, he ſhall renew the Profeſſion of his Principles, we have all poſſible aſſurance, not only of the utmoſt Plainneſs and Sincerity of that Profeſſion, but of the Sincerity alſo of his paſt Actions in purſuance of thoſe Principles; for he ſtakes his Soul for the truth of his belief of them, and appeals to God (to whom he is immediately going) for the Uprightneſs and Honeſty of his former Proceedings.

But Sir, That I may proceed in Order, I am in the firſt place to acquaint you, that ſome time after his Expulſion from his Habitation at *Lambeth*, he retir'd into the Countrey, to the Place of his Nativity, which was the ancient Eſtate and Reſidence of his Anceſtors for above 300 Years, and where he built a ſmall Habitation, but large enough for his Retinue and Attendants which were only two or three Servants; Here he choſe to fix himſelf in his Retirement; here he enjoy'd the ſame Chearfulneſs of Spirit, the ſame Serenity of Mind, and (in one Word) the ſame good Conſcience; there was ſome difference in the outward State, in the Splendor and Ornament, but none at all in the Man; and thoſe who repair'd to him from all Parts were bleſſed with the ſame charming and familiar Converſe, the ſame holy Admonitions and Inſtructions, and they found exactly the ſame *Great Arch-Biſhop*, under a plain Roof in a Countrey Village, that they us'd to meet with in his

Palace. Some receive Honour and Reputation, from the Places they hold, and ſome *Infamy*; the one as having too little Vertue, the other too much Vice: But when a man's Vertues bear an equal Proportion with his Station, they are inherent in his Perſon, and remove with it; when he reſided at *Lambeth*, his Epiſcopal Vertues had there their Reſidence alſo: But when he was forced to leave it, he did not leave his Vertues behind him to be poſſeſſed by the *next Comer*, (and if this needs to be prov'd, we have Ocular Demonſtration) but they followed his Perſon in all Fortunes and Places; and we had a *Moſt Reverend Arch Biſhop* in *Freſingfield*, when there was none at *Lambeth*, nor nothing like it. His Obſcurity was a new Acceſſion of Honour to him; it was the Effect of a good Cauſe and a good Conſcience, which though it added no new Vertue, it made it more bright and viſible; they were the ſame Vertues he had before, but with greater Luſtre, and we had with us the very ſame Venerable *Arch-Biſhop*, but we had him with the additional Characters of his Expulſion, and cloath'd with the new Honours of his Conſtancy and Sufferings.

In this juſt and honourable Retirement he enjoyed all the Pleaſures and Advantages of Solitude; a meer Quiet from the Hurry and Buſineſs of this World, thereby affording greater Vacancy and Leiſure for the Concernment of the next, is in it ſelf ſo deſireable that ſome have voluntarily ſtript themſelves of all their Lofty Acceſſions on purpoſe to gain an opportunity of retiring into themſelves, and cultivating their Minds: But when

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it is an eſcape from a ſpreading Contagion, when quitting the World is quitting the Sins of it too; 'tis then not only an opportunity of exerciſing good Things, but a Sanctuary and Refuge alſo from thoſe that are bad: But when to both theſe is ſuperadded a *Noble and Glorious Occaſion*, when 'tis the Reſult of Piety and Principles, the Lot of Vertue and a good Conſcience; Privacy is then ſet out to the beſt Advantage, 'tis both our Peace and our Security, but 'tis withal our Joy and our Crown. This was our *Great Prelat*'s Retirement, and in this Glorious Sphere his Vertues moved during the laſt Stage of his Life; for although he needed no Sequeſtration from the World, to learn to know himſelf, and to ſearch into his Conſcience, thoſe had been his conſtant Exerciſes and Employment from his Youth; although no Incumbrances of his Station, or Emergencies of publick Affairs, could ever tempt him to rob God of his Dues, to interrupt his Devotions, and the neceſſary Works of Piety; yet the Receſs his Conſcience had made him afforded him larger and more frequent Opportunities of converſing with God, and with himſelf; of imploring the Divine Favour, Forgiveneſs, and Aſſiſtance; of perfecting his Repentance, making up the Accounts of his Soul, and preparing himſelf for another World: And theſe were the Companions of his Solitude, the Fruits and Improvements of his Sufferings. But beſides his own perſonal and particular Concerns, there were others of a more publick Nature which he charg'd himſelf with, and intereſted himſelf in, *the Groans of a languiſhing and*

*afflicted Church, and the Scandal and Sins of an Apoſtate One*, were each of them ſad Subjects, and both deſerved and excited his Chriſtian Compaſſion, and his earneſt Addreſs and Appli ation to God for Grace and Mercy in proportion to the reſpective States and Conditions. Theſe are Times of Trial and Temptation, of Defection and Apoſtacy; and, as God knows there was occaſion enough, ſo he ſuited his Petitions to the Exigency of the Times, That God would be graciouſly pleaſed to eſtabliſh the ſtrong, confirm the weak, reclaim and recover the lapſed; thoſe who deſerted his Authority as well as their own Principles, could not run away from his Prayers and Charity; and God grant that they may find the benefit of his holy Devotions, who would receive none by his Influence and Example.

But beſides theſe, there is yet another Ingredient which render'd his Solitude more Triumphant, and that is the Reaſon and Occaſion of it; it was not the Effect of Wearineſs or Satiety, of Sullenneſs or Diſappointment, but founded in juſt and righteous Principles; and the goodneſs of the Cauſe ſanctified the Affliction, and made his Privacy venerable in the Eyes of all, and very comfortable to himſelf; it was indeed the Exerciſe and Safeguard of his Vertues, but it was moreover the *actual Suffering* for them; and this gave it Life and Spirit, chang'd the Stile and Denomination, made his Meanneſs his Glory, his Abaſement his Honour and Ornament; and though he was always a very Great Man, yet he made a greater Figure in the World, and ſuſtained a more

more Honourable Character in his Privacy and Retirement, than ever he had done in the utmoſt Extent of his Proſperity and Plenty: And this was not only external, and terminated without him, but it was an Honour founded in Righteouſneſs, *The Honour that comes from God only*, which exerts a mighty Power within, and ſheds ineffable Comforts into a Man's own Breaſt. He ſaw nothing about him, but what were Arguments of his Uprightneſs, and carried the Marks of his Sincerity; and this join'd with the internal Teſtimony of his own Soul, is perhaps one of the moſt ravishing and cheriſhing things in the whole World: And here we may contemplate the mighty power of a good Conſcience, how eaſily it triumphs over the World, and what unſpeakable Pleaſure ariſeth in the Soul, from the ſence of an honeſt and reſolute Adherence to Duty. He did not only bear his Suffering and low Condition with Patience, but he exulted in it; it was matter of the higheſt Satisfaction to him, and any Man might read the Pleaſure in his Breaſt, by the conſtant Serenity and Cheerfulneſs of his Aſpect; and I dare ſay, that the moſt greedy Worldling never enjoyed half that ſolid Complacency, in the moſt lucky and fortunate Acquiſitions, as he did in being deprived of all, and reduced to the mean Circumſtances of a private Habitation.

Thus Holy were his Exerciſes, thus Heavenly his Comforts, till at length it pleaſed God, (in order to perfect and compleat them) to viſit him with a long and languiſhing Sickneſs. His Diſeaſe was at firſt an intermitting

mitting Fever, but the Fits were ſo extream Violent that he was very near Dying in the Second, and lay Speechleſs and bereav'd of his Senſes for ſome Hours; but by the help of the *Cortex Peruvianus*, adviſed and directed by his Phyſician, a Third Fit was prevented: But however the ſtopping the Fits gave ſome Reſpite, yet it was without any promiſing Hopes; he had ſome Lucid Intervals, but recovered no Strength; he lay under a general Weakneſs and Decay, and ſo continued Waſting to the laſt Period, till his Spirits and Vitals were exhauſted, and his Soul took Wing from a dry and emacirated Carkaſs. This Diſtemper from the Beginning to the End continued juſt *Thirteen* Weeks; He fell Sick on the 26th of *Auguſt*, and Dyed on the 24th of *November* following.

And now, Sir, I preſume you expect to ſee the Fruits of a good Life, the Conduct of ſincere Vertue when it is to wreſtle with the Terrors of Death; this is the laſt and it is the greateſt of Trials: And here we perceive the wonderful Advantages of Sincerity, that it ſtandeth us in ſtead when we have moſt need, and when all things elſe fail us; it ſupporteth us when our Spirits are ſpent, and enableth us to look Grim Death in the Face, not only with Confidence but with Addreſs. When he had once ſhewn his Phyſician his waſted and ſhrivl'd Thighs and Legs, void of Fleſh and all nouriſhing Juice and Moiſture, ſaith he, *And can theſe Dry Bones live?* In truth, he was not only contented and willing to die, but he breath'd after it with Ardency, he deſired it, and cal-

called for it, but ſtill with the humbleſt Submiſſion and Reſignation to the Will of God: He uſed to expreſs the Sence of his Heart in theſe Words of the Pſalmiſt, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him: I will lay my Mouth in the Duſt.* In his greateſt Extremities and Agonies, he uſed to ſet before him the great Example of our Saviour, *For*, ſaith he, *As a Lamb carried to the Slaughter, he was Dumb, and opened not his Mouth.* Thoſe great Vertues of Humility and Patience, of Truſt and Affiance in God, of Univerſal Charity and good Will to Men, which by a long Practice he had made habitual and familiar to him, now exerted themſelves moſt powerfully in this Critical Seaſon; and we beheld the Graces of his Life triumphing over the Decays of Nature, and were both the Support and the Crown of his Death-Bed, which plainly teacheth us, how neceſſary it is to gain a Habit of Vertue in the Days of our Health, that we may not have it to ſeek when we have the greateſt occaſion to uſe it. We ſaw the admirable Humility and Patience of his Soul, with what quiet and chearful Reſignation he ſubmitted to the Divine Will throughout the whole Courſe of his languiſhing Sickneſs: There was not the leaſt appearance of any Diſturbance or Diſcompoſure, but the ſame Meekneſs which had always calm'd his Paſſions under former Diſpenſations, was ready now to aſſiſt him, and was in in truth more eminent and viſible *in extremis*. That which came the neareſt to a Complaint, was only a Deſcription of his waſting Condition, in theſe Pious

Words,

Words, *Thy Hand is heavy upon me Day and Night, my Moisture is like the Drought in Summer*, But even this joined with an Act of high Truſt in God; for, ſaith he, *I am low, but muſt be brought lower yet, even to the Duſt of Death; yet though he kill me I will Truſt in him.* His great Piety (which was always quick and active) was now moſt ſprightly and vigorous; and it was ſurprizing to behold, in the perfect failure of all Bodily Supports, with what Preſence of Mind he would turn himſelf to all the Difficulties he lay under, with what wonderful Dexterity he would meet with and alleviate his Extremities, by pious and ſuitable Ejaculations, taken out of the Scriptures, or breath'd from his own pious Soul: An Acute Pain, or dejection of Spirit, (the frequent Companions of his Sickneſs) could no ſooner approach him, but he was always as ready to obviate them by a Divine Sentence or holy Prayer. It was indeed an unſpeakable Comfort and Satisfaction to us, and we reflected on the mighty power of a well ſpent Life, the great Efficacy of the conſtant Practice of Vertues; when we ſaw him with ſo much eaſe and facility overcoming the Throws and Pangs of a bowral Diſtemper, and preventing the Terrors and Convulſions of Death it ſelf. We ſaw his flaming and ardent Charity, both extended and limited according to the Apoſtle's Direction, *To all but ſpecially to them of the Houſhold of Faith.* His ſuffering Brethren were the principal Objects of his Charity and Prayers, but not excluſive of others; but upon the frequent returns and exerciſes of his Devotions, he ſuit-

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ed his Prayers to the general needs of men, and recommended them respectively to the Divine Mercy: In particular the Apostacy of a once Glorious Church stuck very near to him, and this gave great employment to his Charity; he knew that Prayers might reach them who were obstinate to all other Convictions; and in this he was earnest and frequent, that God would touch their Hearts, and reduce them to a Sense of their Sin, and of the great Scandal they had occasioned, and dispose them to repair it by a timely and seasonable Repentance: In short, if he had any Enemies, they also were included in his Prayers, and in particular a little before his last Hour, he solemnly pray'd for *a Blessing upon his Family, and Relations, and Friends, and earnestly begg'd Forgiveness for his Enemies, as he desired it of God for himself.*

But, Sir, I know you expect from me, a more particular account of his *Grace*'s management of himself in this his last Sickness, with respect to the Principles which he own'd, and for which he suffer'd: And, Sir, I shall answer your expectation, having something very considerable to observe to you on this Head; and you will soon perceive how far his Conscience and Soul were engaged in that matter, and that it was impossible for him to have acted otherwise with the Safety of his Conscience, and preserving the Uprightness and Sincerity of an honest Man, if you please to consider.

1. That by his own Order and Appointment, and with words of his own framing, was inscribed upon his Tomb, *At last deprived of all that he could not keep with a good Conscience*, I shall presently give you the Inscription at large, in the mean time, this is as plain, and full a De-

claration as Words can make, that the Reaſon and Ground of his Non-compliance with the preſent Powers, was a *good Conſcience:* he was depriv'd becauſe he could not comply, and he did not comply, becauſe he could not do it with a *good Conſcience:* And it is remarkable, that this came from his own hand, and with intentions to ſurvive him; ſo that we have not only a Death-bed Declaration, but that Declaration perpetuated by himſelf, his dying Teſtimony recorded to ſucceeding Ages, and to remain a Monument to Poſterity.

2. Throughout the whole courſe of his Retirement, and more particularly during the time of his Sickneſs, he never communicated with the *Swearing Clergy*, nor would permit them to Officiate, but I cannot expreſs this better than in his own words, dictated to a Perſon who was then with him, ſome litle time before his Death, to be ſent as from his Grace to a Friend of his, and a copy of which I have kept by me: It is in theſe words. —*My Lord is ſenſible of how great a Concernment it is who miniſters to him in holy Things, we have very few Non-Swearers hereabouts: Mr. W. hath been with us once, and viſited my Lord ſolemnly, Mr. E. hath been here often, and at firſt viſited my Lord very ſolemnly, and it happen'd to be at a time, when there were many Swearers, and Non-Swearers in the Room: He gave me the Abſolution of the Church and not long after the Holy Sacrament: He comes often hither, and when it is ſeaſonable, performs the Holy Offices. At other Times my S---- who perfectly underſtands the Liturgy, uſeth as many of the Prayers as it is fit for him to do: and we heartily implore God's Mercy, for the pardon of our Defects and Indecencies, in the performance of his Holy Service and hope that we are accepted. My Lord never receiveth*

*veth the Sacrament, but with thoſe that come not at the Pariſh and are Non-Furors: He never admits any of the Irregular Clergy to be at the Holy Offices; as for the reſt, if they come when he goes to Prayers, he excludes them not: This hath been his courſe.*

*This my Lord dictated to me from his own Mouth; you ſee how ready his Apprehenſion and Judgment are.*

Nov. 15. 1693.

This, Sir, I conceive needs no application, and here you have your deſire from his own Mouth, an account of his Sence and Judgment, together with his particular Practice in perſuance of it: You know there were other Reports ſpread with you at *London*, as if he had received the Communion at the Hands of a *Furor*, and many ſuch like, and the Noiſe of this came to us in the Countrey, and was a great Trouble to his Lordſhip, and in Truth gave the Occation, of repreſenting his own Practice in the foregoing Letter. He had too juſt a Sence of the Unity of the Church, and the Flagrancy of the Schiſm, to admit ſuch Practices; and you may pleaſe to Obſerve, that this was but nine Days before his Death, and I can aſſure you, he never alter'd his Courſe afterwards; nay, he took particular and eſpecial care, that a *Non-Furor* ſhould perform the laſt Office of the *Burial of the Dead*, and particularly appointed him by Name. I ſuppoſe you will make no Objection, that the Letter above runs in two Stiles, one in his own Name, and another in the Perſon of the Writer; that is very uſual and familiar, when a Perſon dictates what is to be ſent to a particular Friend, and there was no need, in Matters that related

purely to his own Practice, to be very nice as to the Stile of the Repreſenter: And this difference of the Stile, further confirms the Teſtimony of the Writer, that it was *dictated from his own Mouth*, for part of it ſuſtains his own Perſon, and thereby gave Credit and Authority to the reſt, as proceeding from the ſame Fountain, being Branches of the ſame Letter, and part of the ſame Repreſentation.

3. The Third and Laſt Thing, I have to remark to you in this particular, is, that drawing near to his End, he ſaid, in the hearing of ſome of his Servants, *that his Profeſſion* (in the particular Caſe for which he Suffered) *was real and conſcientious, and not proceeding from any ſiniſter Ends; that he had the very ſame Thoughts, of the preſent State of Affairs, which he had at firſt; and that if the ſame thing was to be acted over again, he would quit all that he had in this World, rather than violate his Conſcience,* And in further Confirmation of this, in leſs than an Hour before he dyed, he put up theſe two hearty and earneſt Petitions to Almighty God.

1. *That God would Bleſs and Preſerve this poor Suffering Church, which by this Revolution is almoſt deſtroyed.*

2. *That he would Bleſs and Preſerve the King, the Queen, and the Prince; and in his due time to reſtore them to their juſt and undoubted Rights.*

And now, Sir, you ſee the Make and Compoſition of theſe his *Grace's* Principles and Practiſes; you ſee their very *Inwards*, and have a Window open into his Breaſt; you plainly perceive his Conſcience, and his Uprightneſs in this whole Affair, and you have the Teſtimony,

mony of his last Breath, and his expiring Prayers. He was so well satisfied both of the Eternal *Truth* of those Principles by which he acted, and of his own *Sincerity* in living up to them, and suffering for them, that he ventur'd his Soul in the same Bottom with them, closed up his Life with a Profession of them, and made them the Subject of his last Recommendatory Prayers. I must confess this Inference needs an Apology; for if the Nature of the Thing it self did not sufficiently testify this, (as it certainly does) I do not believe that any Man who knew him did ever think otherwise, or in the least imagine but that he proceeded with the highest Sincerity. But since we live in an Age where Men oftentimes speak more than they think, and because they themselves are apt to act upon corrupt Ends, are willing to charge the same upon others in their own Justification; it may perhaps not be altogether unseasonable to make good that by undeniable Evidence, although all Men in their own Consciences do already believe it. And if the loss of all this World, and the venturing our Hopes in the next, in behalf of a Man's Principles, be not a sufficient and convincing Proof of his Satisfaction and Sincerity in them; then either there are no such Things in the World, or they can never be known.

I am now come to the last Period of this Great and Holy *Prelat*'s Life; and all that I shall represent to you, is, That his Memory and Intellectuals remained perfect to the last Moment, and even his Senses also; a very little time before he dyed, he called for a Common-Prayer-Book, of the smallest Print, and turn'd to the Commendatory Prayer, and order'd it to be read; and that being perform'd, he composed himself more solemnly for his

his Departure. He put his Hands and Arms down to both his Sides, and in a manner *laid out* himself, and would have his Head laid lower, and with great Willingness and Chearfulness submitted himself to the Stroak of Death. The Time, his Age, and other Circumstances, you will see in the Postscript, when you read the Inscription on his Monument, composed by himself, and directed by him to be engraved thereon. He was Buried in *Fresnsield* Church-yard, against the South-wall of the Church, by his own Appointment.

And thus, Sir, I have given you a true, though very imperfect, Account of the Pious and Exemplary Behaviour of our late most Reverend Arch-Bishop, in his last Sickness, and of his Death. And I desire you would account it (what in Truth it is) very defective; and that there are many other Passages relating to his abundant Charity and Beneficence, his memorable Edifices and Endowments, which equally deserve to be recommended to us, and to be transmitted to Posterity; and I hope to see a more full and perfect Representation perform'd by a more able Hand. I shall conclude with this Prayer, *That God would give us Grace to follow his Steps with the same Resolution and Constancy, that in his good time, we may be partakers of the same Glory and Immortality.*

I am, *SIR*,

Your Faithful Friend and Servant.

On

On the Right Side of the Tomb.

P. M. S.

*LECTOR*, Wilhelmi, *nuper Archi Præſulis*
*Qui Natus in Vicinià,*
*Quod Morti Cecidit, propter hunc Murum jacet,*
*Atqui reſurget. Tu interim*
*Semper paratus Eſto, nam qua non putas*
*Venturus Hora Dominus eſt.*

*Obiit Nov.* 24. *An.* { *Nat. Dom.* MDCXCIII. / *Ætat. ſuæ.* LXXVII.

On the Left Side.

P. M. S.

*WILLIAM SANCROFT* Born in this Pariſh, afterward by the Providence of God Arch-Biſhop of *CANTERBURY*, at laſt deprived of all, which he could not keep with a good Conſcience, return'd hither to end his Life; and profeſſeth here at the Foot of his Tomb, That *as naked he came forth, ſo naked he muſt return; The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,* (as the Lord pleaſes ſo come Things to paſs) *Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.*

Over his Head this.

St. Matth. 24. v. 27.

*As the Lightning cometh out of the Eaſt, and ſhineth even unto the Weſt, ſo ſhall alſo the coming of the Son of Man be.*

*FINIS.*